

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS, COPING AND STRESS STYLES AMONG STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF GUILAN

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was determining the relationship between personality traits, coping style and stress. coping style tests (Billings and Moos , 1981) , personality questionnaire of short-form NEO and Perceived stress scale (Cohen and Colleagues, 1983) was done through using sample volume 329 students of Guilan University that were selected via multi-phases cluster sampling method. Data were analyzed through multi-phases Pearson and Regression correlation method. Finding showed that there is a significant relationship between stress, personality traits and coping styles (emotion-based and problem-based). Also, there is a positive and direct relationship between neuroticism and emotion-based coping style and there is a reverse relationship between agreeableness and emotion-based coping style, but there is no significant relationship with other personality traits. The other findings showed that there is a significant and negative relationship between neuroticism and problem-based coping style and there was a positive and meaningful relationship

Stress comes from different sources and has social, physiological, peripheral and psychological factors that involve all dimensions of human life. Because of being exposed to many of peripheral tension factors are inevitable, having some of the psychological traits and skills will enable the person to suffer slight between other factors of personality and problem coping styles. According to findings we can conclude that intent of stress among students is increasing and use of problem-based style cause to decrease the stress.

KEYWORDS: Personality, Coping Style, Stress

INTRODUCTION

Damage. Survey the research literature on the ground of stress shows that personality traits and methods of coping styles with stress are the most important psychological factors in this case. (Costa and MC Cera 1985; quoting from Haren and Mitche L, 2003). Thorough factorial analysis they have concluded that there are five common dimensions between individual differences in personality traits. Neuroticism (N) comes from persons' tendency to experience anxiety, tension, sympathy, enmity, shocking, depression and low self-respect, while extraversion (E) refers to person's tendency to being positive, summon the courage, being energetic and intimate. Openness (O) refers to person's tendency to curiosity, interest to art, artistry, flexibility and wisdom. While agreeableness (A) refers to person's tendency to munificence, kindness, generosity, unanimity and sympathy, philanthropy and trust. Finally conscientiousness (C) refers to person's action, improvement-based, being reasonable and calm.

In 80th decade a structure that was called "coping" has been came to psychology literature (Billings and Moos, 1984) and pressure and mental and physical disorders. Folkman and Lazaros (1986) know coping style of person

recognition and behavioral efforts for overcoming over exhaustion and tolerate or minimizing its effect. Recent researches have shown that applied coping style by a person will effect on psychological well-being and physical well-being (Piko, 2001). Coping styles are divided into three groups of problem-based, emotion-based and avoidant-based. Problem-based coping styles are methods that based on them, person researches some actions that should be done for decreasing or removing exhaustion and includes research of more information about problem, changing structure of problem from recognition view point and giving priority to steps for working on the problem. Emotion-based coping styles are methods that based on them, person concentrates on it and its all efforts are attracted to undesirable emotions and includes crying, getting angry and being upset, working on critical behaviors, mental engagement and daydreaming. Avoidant-based confronting styles need recognition activities and changes and their purpose is avoiding from exhausting occasions and includes involving in a new activity or in the form of coming to society and other people (Haren and Mitche, 2003).

Stress-based disease and making worse of general health has been seen more in people who regularly use from emotional coping (Piko, 2001). Most of the researches have introduced emotional coping as the most effective agent of stress-disease relation(Pakenham ,2004). Avoidant coping style is known as an effective short-term method, but in long-term it obstacles recognition agreement and will increase inability symptoms like depression (Wineman nad et al.1994). Ghazanfari et al' (2008) research results showed that there is a significant relationship between mental health and coping style also, problem-based and emotion-based styles differently determines meaningfully variables variance of anxiety, physical hurt, depression and disorder in social performance. Piko's research results(2001) showed that among girls and boys, inactive and risk coping styles have negative role in psychological health, while problem-solving (a kind of problem-based confronting) and protection research method (a kind of emotion-based method) had relationship with positive mental health. Some other studies have shown that use of emotion-based style cause lower health. (Pakenham, 2001).

Qamari and Fakoor's research results(2010) showed that the more a person use from recognition style of coping with stress, disorder in its mental health will be lower and the more a person use from emotional style of coping with stress, disorder in its mental health will be higher. Farahani and colleagues' (2008) research results showed that among coping styles, only problem based coping style meaningfully decreased the negative relationship between academic stress and positive emotion criterion and only emotion based coping style significantly decreased the negative relationship between academic stress and negative emotion criterion. Boals and et al' (2011) research results showed that high self-concept has relationship with physical and mental reproach symptoms and emotion-based coping style. Problem-based style usually have relationship with psychological health outcomes, emotion and problem-based style separately have relationship with psychological and physical health outcomes, principally emotion-based styles have negative relationship with mental health outcomes, except new positive evaluations that have no relationship with psychological health. (Penely and et al, 2002). Holen and et al' (2012) research results showed that coping styles include active and emotion methods have minor mental health problems, while withdrawal coping styles and disagreement has more mental health problems. Many other studies show that use of problem-based coping styles cause decrease of mental pressure only in a situation that issue and problem can be controlled (Davison, 1998). Generally, coping styles refer to recognition and behavioral efforts for prevention, management and decrease of stress. (Folkman and Lazaros , 1988) researches while are done on the ground of personality traits and tension processes generally have been worked on this issue that how personality dimensions have relationship with coping styles (Penely and Tommako 2002, Kardom and Kropic,2001, Vollarth nad Trogersen,1999, Haren and Mitchel 2003, and Gomez et al, 1999). At the first studies usually it was concentrated on two personality factors

that is neuroticism and extraversion in Iznak theory that seemed both are important anticipators factor of exhaustion and coping styles (Vollrath and Torgersen, 2002).

With regard to coping styles, it has been clear that people with high neuroticism traits participate in inactive and unsuitable styles, while people with high extraversion traits follow active and special protection coping styles (Costa and colleagues, 1992). Generally, studies show that use of emotion-based styles in dealing with tension occasions have high mental pressure, while use of problem-based styles have low stress and mental pressure (Aldovin, 2000). A main point for understanding individual differences in suffering damage to physical and mental problems is person's coping styles against problems. Coping styles with stress is multi-phases method that enables the person to apply that management health and in fact creating stress steps and control the stressful occasion (Jang and colleagues 2004) understood stress is psychological state or process that person threateningly understands its physical and psychological depends on how the person understands occasions and events (Ehlers and et al, 2010)

Jafar Nejad and et al' (2005) research results showed that there is a meaningful relationship between Neuroticism, openness and extraversion factors with mental health, there is a significant relationship between problem-based and emotion-based coping style with mental health, there is a positive significant relationship between openness, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness with problem-based coping style. Behroozian and Nematpoor's (2007) research results showed that synthetically applied coping styles have been problem-solving and emotional styles. There is a significant relationship between extent of stress, reasonable and general health coping styles. University students who had disagreeably coping styles, they had higher stress and minor general health.

Khodaei and Shakori (2009) 's research results showed that high mental well-being was been anticipated via high scores in extraversion factor and low scores in neuroticism factor and emotion-based coping style. Also results showed that the relationships between extraversion and neuroticism factors are mediated only through emotion-based coping style.

Besharat's research results (2007) showed that hopefulness, extraversion and consentient can anticipate changes related to negative problem-based and emotion-based coping styles; getting experience can anticipate changes related to negative problem-based and emotion-based coping styles. Masoodniya's research results (2008) showed that on the ground of coping styles generally and only two factors avoidant and active confronting, there is a significant difference between people with different levels of understood stress.

In a research, Farahani and colleagues (2008) argued that among coping styles, only problem-based coping styles significantly decreased the negative relationship between educational stress and positive emotional criterion and only emotion-based coping styles significantly decreased the negative relationship between educational stress and negative emotional criterion.

Other researchers who have done many researches in this case and have achieved the same results, we can refer to Gomez and colleagues (1999); Vollrath and Torgersen (2000); Kardom and Karpic (2001) and Hooker (1994) Penely and Tommako (2002). Other researchers who have done studied in this case and have achieved the same results we can refer to Folkman and et al (1980). Therefore, as is pointed the purpose of this research is finding out this issue that is there a significant relationship among five important factors of personality, coping styles and stress or not?

RESEARCH METHOD

Population, Sample and Research Performing Method

Research population includes all girl and boy university students in all MA courses at University of Guilan in

2011-2012 educational years. Research sample includes 350 persons from five colleagues of literature and human science, technical, agriculture science, physical education and elementary science at university of Guilan that have been 230 girls and 120 boys and it was achieved through multi-phases cluster sampling method and Morgan table. Data analysis method in this research has been multi-variance regression research.

RESEARCH DEVICES

Personality Questionnaire of NEO

Personality questionnaire of NEO on the bases of five personality factors of Costa and MC Crea (1978) was created and validated. This questionnaire provides a general and complete evaluation from adults' personality. Personality questionnaire on NEO has 240 sentences that 60 questions of it is related psychological criterion. Also this questionnaire evaluates extraversion, getting experience, agreement and conscientiousness criteria. Psychological criterion evaluates 6 dimensions of anxiety, anger and enmity, depression, self-awareness, shocking and vulnerability to stress. Costa and Mc crea (1992) have reported Cronbach Alfa coefficient of this questionnaire, 0.89. In addition, validity of this questionnaire has been 0.89. In this research Cronbaach Alfa coefficient for neuroticism has been reported 0.72, extraversion 0.72, openness 0.64, agreeableness 0.60 and conscientiousness 0.79.

Coping Styles Questionnaire

Billings and Moos(1984) have designed and prepared coping questionnaire with stress in 1981 for measuring coping styles with stress. This criterion has 19 items and it evaluates 3 recognition coping styles(6 items) , behavioral (6items) and avoidant (7 items). In Poorshahbaz's research (2000) retesting perpetuity coefficient of whole questionnaire is $r=0.73$, behavioral coping $r=0.77$, recognition coping $r=0.83$ and avoidant coping $r=0.60$. In this research cronbach Alfa coefficient of whole questionnaire has been 0.70.

Perceived Stress Scale

Cohen and colleagues (2006) have created **Perceived stress scale** that has 14 items and each item will be answered on the bases of five-degree Likert criterion, never, hardly ever, sometimes, often, and usually. In items criterion of 1-2-3-8-11-14 have scored in order of (0-1-2-3-4) and items of 4-5-6-7-9-10-13 have scored in form of (0-1-2-3-4). scale inner parallelism perpetuity coefficients are achieved through CronbachAlfa coefficient in the range of 0.84 to 0.86 in two groups of university students **Perceived stress scale** meaningfullyhas relationship with life events, depression and physical symptoms, use of health service, social anxiety and low satisfaction from life. (Cohen and colleagues , 2006) and in a research that Mimora and Griffiths (2008) have done on Japanese University students , CronbachAlfa coefficient of basic and revision criterion of Japanese in order are 0.88 and 0.81. In this research Cronbach Alfa coefficienthas been reported 0.82.

FINDINGS

Table 1, indicates frequency and percentage of this research sample that 230 girls have 66 percentage of sample and 120 boys have 34 percentage of sample. For surveying the relationship, Pearson test has been used.

Table 1: Surveying the Relationship between Neuroticism, Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Problem-Based Coping Styles

Variables	Amount of Test	Number	Significant level
Neuroticism	0.348	329	0.001
Openness	0.123	329	0.02
Conscientiousness	0.534	329	0.001

Table 1: Contd.,

Extraversion	0.456	329	0.001
Agreeableness	0.241	329	0.001

Above table surveys the relationship between personality variables and problem-based coping styles. With regard to amount of Pearson correlation between variable of neuroticism and problem-based coping style that is negative, we can say that there is a reverse relationship between these two variables. That is, the less neuroticism is in people, the more problem based coping style. Also, there is a relationship between openness, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness and problem- based coping style. That is, the more extent of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness, the more use of problem- based coping style.

Table 2: Surviving the Relationship between Neuroticism, Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Agreeableness and Problem- Based Coping Style

Variables	Amount of Test	Number	Meaningful Level
Neuroticism	0.235	329	0.001
Openness	0.026	329	0.06
Conscientiousness	-0.065	329	0.2
Extraversion	0.73	329	0.7
Agreeableness	-0.219	329	0.001

Above table indicates the relationship between personality variables and emotion- based coping style. With regard to extent of Pearson correlation between conscientiousness and emotion- based coping style that is negative; we can say that there is a reverse relationship between these two variables. That is, the less conscientiousness in people, the more emotion-based coping style. Also, there is a positive relationship between openness, neuroticism, extraversion and agreeableness and problem- based coping style. That is, the more extent of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness, the more use of problem- based coping style.

Table 3: Surviving the Relationship between Neuroticism, Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Agreeableness and Stress

Variables	Amount of Test	Number	Significant Level
Neuroticism	0.170	329	0.002
Openness	0.150	329	0.003
Conscientiousness	0.406	329	0.001
Extraversion	0.380	329	0.001
Agreeableness	0.091	329	0.009

Above table surviving the relationship between neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness and stress. With regard to extent of Pearson correlation, we can say that there is a direct relationship between personality variables and stress. That is, the more extent of neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness, the less extent of stress.

Table 4: Surveying the Relationship between Coping and Stress Styles Factors

	B	Beta	T	Significant Level	F
Fixed amount	117.84	-	35.14	0.001	
Avoidant	-1.38	-0.277	-1.47	0.14	
Recognition	-0.452	-0.096	-0.799	0.425	22.12
Behavioral	-1.12	-0.251	-1.31	0.25	
Problem-based	1.45	0.533	4.69	0.001	
Emotion-based	1.07	0.231	1.21	0.02	

Above table surveys the relationship between stress and coping styles. For surveying the relationship, regression test has been used. Significant level of this test in problem-based style is significant. That is, problem-based and emotion-based coping style has effect on stress and with regard to amount of Beta which is positive, we can say that this variable has a direct effect on stress and also with regard to amount of R^2 , we can say that these variables have ability of determining only 20 percent.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research is survey the relationship between personality traits, coping style and stress among students at university of Guilan. The results showed that there is a relationship between personality factors and problem-based styles. There is a reverse meaningful relationship between neuroticism and problem-based coping style and there is a direct meaningful relationship between other factors of personality such as openness, conscientiousness, and extraversion, agreeableness and problem-based coping styles. Also, there is a direct and meaningful relationship between neuroticism and emotion-based coping style, while there is no meaningful relationship between openness, conscientiousness, extraversion and emotion-based style and there was a reverse and meaningful relationship between agreeableness and problem-based coping style. There was a meaningful and direct relationship between personality factors (neuroticism, openness, extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness) and stress. There is a meaningful relationship between problem-based and emotion-based coping and stress and there was no meaningful relationship between other factors of coping style (avoidant, recognition, behavioral) and stress and problem-based coping style. There is a direct and meaningful relationship between stress and emotion-based coping style.

The results show that there is a negative and meaningful relationship between neuroticism and problem-based coping style. This result is compatible with research results of Shokri and colleagues (2005), Sarvgad and et al (2011), Lee-Bagely and colleagues (2005), Haren and Mitchel (2003) and Penely and Tommako (2003). People with high neuroticism in dealing with stressful occasions, use from passively methods like retreating, day dreaming and also methods on the bases of quarrelsomeness. The negative relationship of neuroticism with problem-based indicates that people with high neuroticism; use less from problem-based style. Extraversion people because of being more energetic, happy and sociable, summon courage and being intimate and incisive, use more from confronting agreeably forms such as seeking social support, positive thinking and problem-based coping style. Also, open-minded people are curious and reasonable and have liberalism attitude and they can tolerate difficulties and respect to difference in thinking and behavioral and this increase of curiosity and acceptance of new ideas cause that open-minded people use more from problem-based style. Conscientious people for having effective traits, capability, taking responsibility in dealing with difficult situation, use more from problem-based style.

According to results, there is a direct and significant relationship between neuroticism and emotion-based coping style and there is a negative and meaningful relationship between agreeableness and emotion-based coping style, while there is no meaningful relationship between other traits of personality (extraversion, openness and conscientiousness) and these findings are compatible with research results of Shokri and et al (2009), Gildin and colleagues (2006), Lee-Bagely and et al (2005), Haren and Mitchel (2003) and Penely and Tommako (2000). In determining these findings we can say that people with high neuroticism generally are exposed to sadness and anxiety, aggression and shocking, these personality traits are compatible with emotion-based coping style, these people use more from emotion-based coping style. Extraversion people for having courage, positive thinking and use of coping agreeably forms, do not use from emotion-based style. Open-minded people for being curious about inner experience of around the world and having liberalism attitude and high hopefulness, use less from emotion-based coping style.

Agreed people for consistency in working and social occasions and having positive social experiences and tendency to interpersonal relation and trusting to others, use less from emotion-based style and conscientious people for getting ready to deal with issues and life problems and being regular and having correct recognition evaluation from their abilities, use less from emotion-based style. According to this research and pervious researches, we find out that there is a positive relationship between neuroticism and extent of stress. In fact, those who have high score in neuroticism are more exposed to negative emotions. Also neuroticism has relationship with processing and remembering of life negative memories (Larson, 1993) while people whom their extraversion is high, have both more stressful events and more pleasurable events (Bloquer, 1995). Findings indicate that there is a significant relationship between personality factors and stress, that these findings are compatible with research results of Nikrahan and colleagues (2010) and Besharat and et al (2007).

According to results of this research, we find out that problem-based coping style has relationship with decreasing extent of stress. About problem-based coping style and extent of stress, Endler, Parker and Summerfeldt (1998) have argued that people who use from problem-based confronting style in stressful occasions, in fact they are making the issue again from the recognition view point and this way they change the stressful occasion. In addition, other findings of this research show a direct relationship between extent of stress and use of emotion-based style, that these findings are compatible with findings of Shokri and colleagues (2005); Folkman and Lazaros(1980); Endler , Parker and Summerfeldt (1998);Nikrahan and colleagues(2011) and Qoreishi Rad and et al (2010).

This research has been done among students at university of Guilan on the ground of relationship between personality traits, confronting and stress styles in generalizing to other university-students in other cities of country and it should be done very carefully. With regard to role of effective coping style in control of stress, we suggest having training sessions with emphases on training of effective coping skills and problem-solving coping skills for university students and also this research should be done in other universities of country.

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